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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XG068

**Fisheries of the South Atlantic; Southeast Data, Assessment, and Review (SEDAR);
Stock ID Workshop for Cobia (*Rachycentron canadum*).**

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of SEDAR 58 Stock Identification (ID) Workshop for Cobia.

SUMMARY: The SEDAR 58 Cobia Stock ID Process will be a multi-step process consisting of a series of workshops and webinars: Stock ID Workshop; Stock ID Review Workshop; Joint Cooperator Technical Review; and a Science and Management Leadership Call. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

DATES: The SEDAR 58 Stock ID Workshop will be held on April 10-11, 2018, from 8:30 a.m. until 6 p.m.; and April 12, 2018, from 8:30 a.m. until 1 p.m. The established times may be adjusted as necessary to accommodate the timely completion of discussion relevant to the Stock ID process. Such adjustments may result in the meeting being extended from, or completed prior to the time established by this notice. Additional SEDAR 58 Stock ID Process workshops and webinar dates and times will publish in a subsequent issue in the Federal Register.

ADDRESSES:

Meeting address: The SEDAR 58 Stock ID Workshop will be held at the Town and Country Inn, 2008 Savannah Highway, Charleston, SC 29407; phone: (843) 571-1000.

SEDAR address: South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201, N. Charleston, SC 29405; www.sedarweb.org.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Julia Byrd, SEDAR Coordinator, 4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201, North Charleston, SC 29405; phone: (843) 571-4366; email: julia.byrd@safmc.net.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Gulf of Mexico, South Atlantic, and Caribbean Fishery Management Councils, in conjunction with NOAA Fisheries and the Atlantic and Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commissions, have implemented the Southeast Data, Assessment and Review (SEDAR) process, a multi-step method for determining the status of fish stocks in the Southeast Region. SEDAR is a three-step process including: (1) Data Workshop; (2) Assessment Process utilizing a workshop and/or webinars; and (3) Review Workshop. Cobia Stock ID will be resolved prior to the start of the SEDAR 58 Data Workshop using the multi-step Stock ID Process. The product of the Data Workshop is a data report which compiles and evaluates potential datasets and recommends which datasets are appropriate for assessment analyses. The product of the Assessment Process is a stock assessment report which describes the fisheries, evaluates the status of the stock, estimates biological benchmarks, projects future population conditions, and recommends research and monitoring needs. The assessment is independently peer reviewed at the Review Workshop. The product of the Review Workshop is a Summary documenting panel opinions regarding the strengths and

weaknesses of the stock assessment and input data. Participants for SEDAR Workshops are appointed by the Gulf of Mexico, South Atlantic, and Caribbean Fishery Management Councils and NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office, Highly Migratory Species Management Division, and Southeast Fisheries Science Center. Participants include: data collectors and database managers; stock assessment scientists, biologists, and researchers; constituency representatives including fishermen, environmentalists, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs); international experts; and staff of Councils, Commissions, and state and federal agencies.

The items of discussion at the Stock ID Workshop are as follows:

1. Review information including genetic studies, growth patterns, movement and migration, existing stock definitions, otolith chemistry, oceanographic and habitat characteristics, prior SEDAR stock ID recommendations and any other relevant information on stock structure.
2. Make recommendations on biological stock structure and the assessment unit stock or stocks to be addressed through SEDAR 58 and document the rationale behind the recommendations.
3. Discuss the strength of evidence in support of stock ID recommendations with particular attention on those that result in a mismatch of biological stock structure, assessment unit stock recommendations, and existing management unit boundaries.
4. If biological stock structure recommendations, assessment stock unit recommendations, and existing management units (state and federal) do not align, provide guidance to address the relative risks (biological and management) and

consequences of managing based on existing Council or prior assessment boundaries.

5. Provide recommendations for future research on stock structure.
6. Prepare a report providing complete documentation of workshop recommendations and decisions.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before this group for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during this meeting. Action will be restricted to those issues specifically identified in this notice and any issues arising after publication of this notice that require emergency action under section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, provided the public has been notified of the intent to take final action to address the emergency.

Special Accommodations

This meeting is accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for auxiliary aids should be directed to the SAFMC office (see **ADDRESSES**) at least 10 business days prior to the meeting.

Note: The times and sequence specified in this agenda are subject to change.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: March 16, 2018.

Tracey L. Thompson,

Acting Deputy Director,

Office of Sustainable Fisheries,

National Marine Fisheries Service.

